(e) In the hearing on 30.10.2001, the BIFR has directed, *inter alia*, that IIBI would convene a joint meeting within 30 days to discuss the proposal submitted by the company. The intimation regarding the date of joint meeting has not been received from IIBI.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Filling up the post of D.G., ICAR

594. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR:
SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post of D.G., ICAR has been lying vacant since August last;

(b) whether there have been procedural differences within ICAR about the appointment of the DG to fill up the vacancy;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken to resolve the differences so as to fill up the vacancy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) After the voluntary retirement of the previous D.G., ICAR on 14.08.2001, Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation was given the additional charge of the post of D.G., ICAR with effect from 15.08.2001 till 03.10.2001.

As per the procedure followed in the past recommendations of the Search Committee, duly approved by the competent authority, were processed. On receipt of the Government's decision, orders have been passed on 04.10.2001. The post of D.G., ICAR has been filled up with effect from 4th October, 2001.

Growth of Agriculture Sector

595. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the expected growth of agriculture in terms of foodgrains in the current financial year based on the production estimate till date;

(b) what would be the expected growth of agriculture including allied sector; and

(c) what has been the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Chief Ministers, with the Agriculture Minister as convener for reforms in the Agriculture Sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The total production of foodgrains during kharif 2001-02, as per the advance estimates released on 28.09.2001, is likely to be 105.59 million tonnes, which is 2.4% more than the foodgrain production of 103.11 million tonnes during kharif 2000-01.

(b) As per the latest estimates released by Central Statistical Organisation in February 2001, the growth in agriculture and allied sector in 2000-01 is 0.9%. The Advance Estimates of growth rate for 2001-02 are likely to become available only in January 2002.

(c) In the Conference of the Chief Ministers on Agriculture Strategy and Food Management held on 21st May 2001, it was decided to constitute a Standing Committee of Union Ministers and Chief Ministers to review and report to the Government of India on the following:

(i) Enhancing the efficiency of procurement an reducing the cost of distribution under PDS through decentralized system of procurement of foodgrains with active involvement of States.

(ii) Implementation of food for work programme, and Grain Bank Scheme.

(iii) Strategy for diversification in agriculture.

(iv) Risk Management in agriculture through an effective crop insurance scheme.

(v) Review of the list of essential commodities and control orders to ensure free movement of agricultural products.

(vi) WTO Agreement on Agriculture—Promotion of exports of agricultural products.

The Standing Committee has held three meetings so far and made the following recommendations:

(i) Government of India should work out a detailed scheme in consultation with State Governments for localized procurement of foodgrains.

(ii) List of essential commodities should be reduced to the minimum and control orders should be reduced or removed at least in respect of wheat and rice to ensure free movement of agricultural produce.

(iii) Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojna be launched in view of large grain stocks.

(iv) The Grain Bank Scheme should be expandeo and extended to all types of calamities and, all BPL families in identified areas should be covered.

(v) The Crop Insurance Scheme has to be made more effective for better risk management.

(vi) The Committee also suggested for promotion of crop diversification and agriculture exports. The committee noted that Minimum Support Price (MSP) was a very important tool and should be rationalized to facilitate diversification particularly towards oilseeds and pulses. The Committee stressed the need to promote exports of agriculture products through improvement in the quality and value of such products in order increase their competitiveness.

Depression in A.P.

596. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons killed, displaced and missing as a result of the recent depression in the Bay of Bengal distrsict-wise in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details of damage caused to roads, bridges and other loss suffered in the State; and